

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1 to 62. (Previously canceled).

63. to 71. (Cancel).

72. (Currently amended). A hard capsule portion made from the process according to claim 63, comprising a film forming composition containing:

a starch ether selected from the group consisting of hydroxypropylated starch, hydroxyethylated starch and mixtures thereof; and

a film setting system comprising:

i.) from 0.01 % to 5%, by weight, of a polysaccharide selected from the group consisting of alginates, agar gum, guar gum, locust bean gum (carob), carrageenan, tara gum, gum arabic, ghatti gum, Khaya grandifolia gum, tragacanth gum, karaya gum, pectin, arabian (araban), xanthan, gellan, starch, Konjac mannan, galactomannan, funoran, acetan, welan, rhamsan, furcelleran, succinoglycan, scleroglycan, schizophyllan, tamarind gum, curdlan, pullulan, dextran and mixtures thereof;

ii.) from 0.01 % to 1%, by weight, of a cation selected from the group consisting of K⁺, Na⁺, Li⁺, NH₄⁺, Ca⁺⁺ or Mg⁺⁺ and mixtures thereof;

iii.) less than 3%, by weight, of a sequestering agent selected from the group consisting of ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid, acetic acid, boric acid, citric acid, edetic acid, gluconic acid, lactic acid, phosphoric acid, tartaric acid or salts thereof, methaphosphates, dihydroxyethylglycine, lecithin, beta cyclodextrin, salts thereof and mixtures thereof; and

iv.) from 2% to 12%, by weight, water.

74. (New) The capsule portion according to claim 73, wherein the film former comprises from 88% to 98% by weight of a starch ether.

75. (New) The capsule portion according to claim 73, wherein the sequestering agent is selected from the group consisting of ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid, citric acid, salts thereof and mixtures thereof.

76. (New) The capsule portion according to claim 73, wherein the film former further comprises from 0 to about 20%, based upon the weight of the composition, of a plasticizer.

77. (New) The capsule portion according to claim 76, wherein the plasticizer is selected from the group consisting of polyethylene glycol, glycerol, sorbitol, sucrose, corn syrup, fructose, dioctyl-sodium sulfosuccinate, triethyl citrate, tributyl citrate, 1,2-propylenglycol, mono-, di- or triacetates of glycerol, natural gums and mixtures thereof.

78. (New) The capsule portion according to claim 73, wherein the film former further comprises from 0 to about 10%, based upon the weight of the composition of a colouring agent.

79. (New) The capsule portion according to claim 78, wherein the colouring agent is selected from the group consisting of azo-, quinophthalone-, triphenylmethane-, xanthene- or indigoid dyes, iron oxides or hydroxides, titanium dioxide, natural dyes and mixtures thereof.

80. (New) The capsule portion according to claim 78, wherein the colouring agent is selected from the group consisting of patent blue V, acid brilliant green BS, red 2G, azorubine, ponceau 4R, amaranth, D+C red 33, D+C red 22, D+C red 26, D+C red 28, D+C yellow 10, yellow 2 G, FD+C yellow 5, FD+C yellow 6, FD+C red 3, FD+C red 40, FD+C blue 1, FD+C blue 2, FD+C green 3, brilliant black BN and mixtures thereof.

81. (New) The capsule portion according to claim 78, wherein the colouring agent is selected from the group consisting of carbon black, iron oxide black, iron oxide red, iron oxide yellow, titanium dioxide, riboflavin, carotenes, anthocyanines, turmeric, cochineal extract, chlorophyllin, canthaxanthin, caramel, betanin and mixtures thereof.